

No 5

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A

Country Gentleman's Reasons

FOR

VOTING AGAINST

MR. WILBERFORCE'S MOTION

FOR

A BILL TO PROHIBIT THE
IMPORTATION OF AFRICAN NEGROES
INTO THE COLONIES.

LONDON :

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trade, and increased the shipping of other nations at the expence of our own, would be the *consciousness* of our deriving no public benefit by the *iniquitous business* we assisted other nations in carrying on. *That consideration*, however, I own, did not overbalance, in my mind, the mischiefs to be apprehended from the increase of the trade and navigation of other nations, and the diminution of our own, and especially as a considerable abatement was to be made from the philanthropy of the resolution, on account of the want of those regulations which it is in the power of the British government to make, as well respecting the mode of procuring the negroes as in their transportation, *while the trade continues in our hands*, but which could neither be made nor enforced were we to carry it on for *others*. I therefore concluded that, on all accounts, it would be better to *regulate* than to *prohibit* the procuring negroes for our colonies.

Whether the African princes, states, or individuals, can acquire such a property in their fellow creatures as to give them a right to sell them into perpetual servitude, is a question I leave for the discussion of Civilians and Divines ! The practice of mankind from the earliest ages of the world, is certainly in favour of the supposition that they can ; and the heads of the church of England have either directly admitted it, or tacitly allowed it, in several instances, as well in as out of Parliament * ; and it being well known that the Africans sold one another long before we traded

* See Mr. Knox's Letter to Mr. Wilberforce, with the papers annexed to it.

to that country, and that *they* do now sell one another to other European traders, being also an established fact, I conceive the question, with respect to the trade itself, is reduced to this single consideration, viz. Is it, or is it not, proper for the people of Great Britain to take a share in a trade carried on by other nations from the earliest ages of the world, and which other nations do and will continue to carry on, whether we partake in it or not? The principle upon which I decided this question, in my own breast, was this: That it is in our power to render the condition of the African negro much more comfortable by purchasing and transporting him to our colonies, than it now is, or than it is in our power to render it in Africa. Enough is known of the condition of the negroes in Africa to satisfy the most scrupulous that they are there considered and treated as the absolute property of their princes or great men; that *they* are without instruction of any kind; that they possess, in general, scarce any characteristic, except their outward shape and speech, which distinguishes men from the inferior animals. To remove them, therefore, to an enlightened country, and in recompence for their moderate labour to teach them to know and worship the Supreme Being, and to open to them the sacred depositories of his will, and of the glorious rewards he has promised to confer on those who do it, is surely to benefit them. And, therefore, as I could not deem the *principle* of the trade repugnant to the laws of humanity or religion, I freely consented to its continuance, in the hope and confidence, however, that such regulations would be made as should have the effect, in a
good

good degree, to correct the abuses complained of; and I was the more confirmed in this opinion and hope by the instances of abuse which were stated to have happened, as well upon the coast of Africa, as in the middle passage, and in our colonies; the two latter of which it is evidently in our own power to correct; and, indeed, much has been done already towards it; and if our power does not extend, (as it certainly does not), to *regulate* the mode of procuring slaves throughout the interior of Africa, it is still less competent to put an entire stop to it. The abuses, however, on the coast of Africa, which have been so much amplified, are such as it is in the power of Parliament to correct in a good degree; and it was both cruel and unjust to impute *such abuses* to the merchants and planters as they *had not*, and Parliament *had* the power to prevent or punish. The cognizance of all crimes committed upon the high seas certainly belongs to our criminal Court of Admiralty; and it was the fault of Administration that the Captain, whose murder of an infant on board his ship was so pathetically described, was not punished as a felon; nor is it yet too late to bring him to justice, if he be living; and if the kidnapping of Africans be not an offence cognizable by any of our laws now in being, it surely may be made so, and the offenders punished upon their return to England. The correction of the abuses complained of in our colonies belongs to their several legislatures, some of whom have already gone a great way towards it; and there is no doubt but that, upon proper recommendation, the others will do the same; and that which I conceive to be the proper ob-

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ject of our philanthropy, the *bettering the condition of the African negroes and their progeny, as well in respect to temporals as spirituals*, by their removal to our colonies, will be obtained ; whereas I have shewn, that the resolution proposed would have answered no benevolent or beneficial purpose whatever ; and therefore I trust that myself, and all those who joined with me in giving it a negative, will, upon a candid consideration of the reasons I have adduced, stand acquitted of the heavy charges which have been laid against us ; and if those prejudices are dispelled, I may flatter myself with obtaining a fair hearing to such reasons of policy as had a secondary influence upon my conduct that night. The first of those which I shall mention is, the danger of alienating the affections of our subjects in the colonies by the harsh means which must have been employed to carry an act for the purpose into execution. I know, indeed, it was on a former day properly and manfully said, that means were not wanting to Government to enforce obedience to its laws in all parts of the British dominions ; but I am old enough to remember to have heard it also said in the same place, not many years since, that if the North-American colonies should make a nail or a horseshoe, their ports should be filled with ships, and their towns with troops ; and yet I have lived to see all those colonies not only make nails and horseshoes, but military weapons also, and point them at the breasts of the King and Parliament of Great Britain with success.

The prohibitory act, to be effectual, must have made all British and Irish, and British-colony ships,
liable

liable to seizure, if found with negroes on board in any port of the British Colonies. Now the laws of the Colonies vest the property of negroes in their owners; and those laws extend their operation to the utmost limits of the several colonies; and I well know, (and if Ministers do not know it, their governors are highly culpable for not informing them of it,) that every colony deems its own legislature *the only authority* that can make laws within the limits of their respective jurisdictions; and were an act of Parliament to enact any thing contrary to a law of the Colony, it would be deemed of no force within that Colony. The act, therefore, which should direct a custom-house officer to seize any British ship, having negroes on board belonging to persons residing in such Colony, would be opposed and resisted, and as every Colony would make a common cause of it; all the troops and ships of Great Britain would be found wanting to compel submission, which at last could not be effected, even if no other power interfered, without the destruction of the Colonies. Another embarrassing, though less dangerous circumstance, would have arisen out of the liberty which it was admitted, ought in justice to be allowed to the purchasers of lands in the Ceded Islands, to provide themselves with negroes, to enable them to comply with the conditions of cultivation and improvement, they were bound to perform in a limited time, under pain of forfeiture of the lands they had purchased; for so long as this indulgence continued, it would be very much the fault of masters of ships, with negroes on board, if they subjected their cargoes to seizure upon the
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high seas to the windward of any of those islands, as they would only have to declare that they were bound for the one to leeward of them. And fresh difficulties would have arisen in framing clauses for preventing their re-exportation to the other colonies, after being landed in any of those islands, or their importation from thence into any of the other Colonies. But besides, as in order to render the prohibition effectual provision must have been made in the act to prevent the purchase of negroes at any of the British settlements on the coast of Africa, and also to prohibit the exportation thither of any of those articles which are used in the purchase of them, another fleet and army must have been sent to the coast of Africa; and at the same time it would probably have been found necessary to increase the military establishment at home to *keep things quiet* HERE. Such were the impending evils which, it appears, the majority on the 15th instant preserved the nation from by their rejection of Mr. Wilberforce's motion. I am, however, far from imputing to the eloquent leaders, in this unadvised business, any intention of involving this country in such calamities; for I really believe they were not foreseen by them, as great prescience is seldom found attached to the most splendid talents; nor, perhaps, would any of these mischiefs have actually befallen the country, even if a bill, founded upon the resolution, had passed the House of Commons, as I am persuaded the great and distinguished characters in the Upper House, to whom the nation looks up with confidence of protection, would not have suffered their country to be involved in such calamities

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ties by a most wanton and unprovoked attack upon the unoffending, peaceable colonies, and at a time too when the nation was smarting under the wounds which it had received in an unsuccessful contest with its former colonies. But then, in that case, an evil I deprecate almost as much as any of the others, (a rupture of the present Administration,) might have followed the rejection of the bill in the Lords. Every well-wisher, therefore, to the peace and prosperity of the empire, and to the continuance of the present Administration, must applaud the vote I gave; and I trust there is wisdom enough in the country to prevent the necessity of my repeating it at any future period.

In order to shew that I had good grounds for the opinion I formed and acted upon, viz. “ That the
 “ condition of the African negroes and their pro-
 “ geny may be bettered, as well in respect to tempo-
 “ rals as spirituals, by their removal to our colo-
 “ nies,” I here subjoin Extracts from the evidence of some of the best known and most respectable characters which were before Mr. Wilberforce’s Committee, as it has been abridged and published under direction of the society for abolishing the slave trade, and cannot therefore be supposed to be too favourably stated.

Witness examined.—JOHN BARNES, Esq.

I was Governor of Senegal from 1763 to 1766. Thirteen years in Africa. There have been slaves in all Africa as far back as he has heard of: they be-
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come so by capture in war (not a great proportion) by conviction for theft, murder, adultery, withcraft; also for debt. He has been told of many by gambling. Polygamy universally allowed. Witchcraft frequently charged; the trial always full and fair before the elders of the town. Understood principals were put to death, rest of the family made slaves. Does not believe that crimes should have been imputed from the fairness and openness of the trial. Persons convicted generally sold for the benefit of the party injured.

Never heard of princes going to war or breaking up villages to make slaves. Make war there as in other countries. If prisoners cannot ransom themselves, must be sold. Never knew of kidnapping by blacks; is confident it would not pass unpunished. People in the country possess slaves, some an incredible number. Believes they have not any power over their lives, except prisoners of war in the act of capture. Great numbers brought by slave merchants from interior parts. Much trade in slaves to North Barbary and Egypt. Neighbourhood of coasts and rivers extremely populous. War is very little destructive, as he always understood from the natives. Senegal furnishes from 1000 to 1400 slaves. Believes but for slavery the laws would be more sanguinary. No improvement in civilization during his thirteen years residence. Obstructions to it the same as among the American savages. When in Africa, during the war of 1756, fewer ships arrived; slaves were consequently cheaper. Understood that those which remained on hand were sent to North Barbary and

and Egypt; no attempt was made to set them at work. The slave trade always carried on openly between ships and the natives. The people of North Barbary come and buy slaves, and carry them back a distance of ten degrees. The African owner holds one description of slaves as merchandize; another, the domestic, he cannot sell but for crimes.

Witness examined.—RICHARD MILLS, Esq.

Was eighteen years and an half in the Company's service on the gold coast, from 1765 to 1784. For the first ten years commanded at most of the subordinate posts; for the last seven lived at Cape Coast Castle, and commanded the whole. Was absent about twenty-six months of that time.

Gold Coast extends from Cape La Hoa to the river Volta about 400 miles.

Had been at Senegal, Goree, Gambia, and Sierra Leone.

Understood the Gold-Coast language perfectly. His evidence confined to the water side; knows nothing of the interior country, except once when he was twenty miles inland; does not believe he was ever five miles from the Coast.

The Gold Coast generally petty states; knows but of one despotic monarchy there, at Apollonia, which might be eight or ten miles of Coast.

Believes slavery has been practised in those countries for centuries.

The Fantees on the water side provide one fourth of the slaves purchased by us on the Gold Coast; the
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other three-fourth from inland, believes the whole from seven to eight thousand.

Slaves sold by black brokers to Europeans.

They are made slaves for theft, debt, adultery, and witchcraft ; they have as fair trials according to the laws as elsewhere. Trials for witchcraft are generally in the night ; but from generally seeing all satisfied, except the culprits, concludes the trials fair.

Convicts sold for the benefit of the injured ; has known thousands of debtors sold for the benefit of creditors.

Does not know he ever heard the word kidnapping mentioned out of this country. It cannot be practised to any extent without certain detection, for the natives have one general language, and the brokers have daily intercourse with the shipping : hence a kidnapped slave on board would tell his case to the brokers, who, from interest and regard to the laws, would find out the offender.

Has no doubt human sacrifices are generally practised ; has had ocular proof of it ; many thousands are sacrificed at great men's funerals, to which such sacrifices are chiefly confined ; every one who knows the language knows this to be general.

While he was there, the Dutch, Danes, and Portuguese, a few French, and a very considerable number of Americans, traded for slaves. The French had then no settlement there ; understands they now have, or are building one ; but their trade there is now considerable, not with the natives, but with our ships. The Americans traded very considerably on that coast on the first going and till the war. Under-

stands that they have taken it up again, and that several of their ships are now there chiefly from Boston ; but he doubts not they will soon have ships from other ports.

Not one in an hundred of the slaves exported are natives of Apollonia. The late King took more pleasure in killing than selling his slaves : he was a great warrior and monster : he was many years at war with the Dutch, who attempted to take his country, which he ceded to us in 1765. Believes many thousands were lost on both sides.

They have no punishment that he knows of but death and slavery.

It often happens that one slave, in a lot of eight or ten, is refused for some little defect, though otherwise strong. He has generally found such importunate to be bought, and endeavouring to shew himself as capable of labour as the rest. Generally nine tenths of all he has bought seemed pleased at exchanging black for white masters. Believes their joy arises from removing from a situation where they think their lives in danger from being subservient to their masters will. Masters put slaves to death in their rites, and probably in cases unknown to Europeans. He cannot speak to the cause so well as to the fact.

Captain WILLIAM MACINTOSH *examined.*

Was from early in 1762 to June 1762 as midshipman and Captain's clerk of a King's vessel at Benegal to defend the river's mouth.

When in the King's sloop he often went into the country several days at a time, and once walked from Senegal to Goree and back, (ferried across to Goree) always heard that, on the coast of Senegal particularly, slaves were made for crimes, but most of them came down the river from Inland. Never heard of villages in that country being pillaged to procure slaves; certainly never heard of their being kidnapped by the natives; has heard of their being kidnapped by Europeans; but no man ever told him he saw it; never knew it happen.

In 1788 he was there a single ship when the war had stopped the slave trade, and he wished to reduce the price. He reasoned with them about the folly of keeping it up when there was likely to be no buyer. Asked a chief what he would do with his slaves then, observing that he must let them go again (meaning prisoners of war). The Chief replied, "What! let them go again to kill me again?" And in short, he gave me to understand that they would put them to death.

Ships from that coast always sail in the day, generally in the morning. Signals perfectly understood by the natives; are made several days before sailing.

Has had no connection with the African trade these ten years, nor likely ever to have any.

Never heard of sending boats to seduce boys and other people in order to make slaves of them.

JEROME BARNARD WEUVES, Esq. *examined.*

Was fourteen years in Africa, chiefly as Governor of most of the British forts on the Gold Coast; left it
more

more than five years ago ; understood the language as well as most Europeans.

That country is divided into petty states. At Anamaboe there is a King ; at other parts, pynims and elders, and cabishers above them.

From Succundee to Accra is the Fantee country. Slaves are the greatest part of their wealth. There are born slaves and purchased slaves ; a born slave cannot be sold, but for a crime, they are tried by Judges of their own clan, (i. e. slaves belonging to, and inherited by, one man) ; the punishment generally slavery. They are made slaves for theft, adultery, and withcraft, and from gaming themselves away. For these crimes freemen are also made slaves.

Criminals sold for the benefit of the injured. Freemen are tried by the pynims, who wear a peculiar straw hat, and who meet in the market place, if there is no palaver house (an open court of justice), and try them openly. Believes the Judges either of a free or slave criminal receive no reward.

Gamesters become slaves by throwing dice ; there is no trial, they surrender themselves ; but gaming is not frequent on the Gold Coast.

Believes there is a trial for witchcraft, but never saw one. He once bought a family of nine, (neither of the superior nor inferior class), one of whom only had been accused of witchcraft. The whole town came to see them fairly off the beach. Hence infers they had a fair trial. Witchcraft certainly involves the whole family (who are always extirpated without regard to persons).

Fancies from 6 to 8000, perhaps more, slaves are yearly

yearly exported from the Gold Coast ; dares say above two thirds by the English, the rest by the Dutch and Danes.

There was no war while he was there ; is certain the natives of the Gold Coast sold in that time were not prisoners of war, but merely criminals.

Knows nothing of kidnapping ; is sure it would be impracticable. Canoe men being natives, it would be impossible to get off kidnapped slaves without being known. No Captain would risk his trade by taking off any person unlawfully.

Ships before they can trade must pay customs. The King sends down elders to receive his customs and their own ; then three, five, or seven guns, are fired, and the ensign hoisted to shew that the ship may trade. Scarce a day passes but black brokers come and sleep on board at pleasure to see the trade properly carried on. Hence a person wrongfully seized would certainly be able to convey his complaints on shore. He hardly knows a trade more fairly carried on ; the black broker or slave's owner has the choice of the goods ; if they suit him, he sells the slave ; if not, he takes him away.

Never heard of breaking up villages to make slaves ; nothing of the kind existed in the fourteen years he was there. Has heard the natives say there was want of slaves during inland wars.

A great many, perhaps one half, or two thirds, of the slaves sent from the Gold Coast come from far inland. The black brokers told him they go three, four, or five days journey to a market inland, to which slaves are brought by more inland brokers, and so from

from many more inland brokers. He judges such slaves to be of various tribes (from the different mode of marking their bodies, some filing their teeth, above all, their different languages) has had twenty, thirty, or forty, who did not know each others language. Think they are bred inland for slaves, because some of them do not seem sufficiently robust and spirited for warriors. Slaves are not bred for sale on the Gold Coast, but sold for crimes.

Human sacrifices prevail on the Gold Coast, and he believes have prevailed from time immemorial. Slaves, he believes, born so or purchased, are sacrificed on the death of some great man. They think the manes of the dead will be uncomfortable, unless some persons are sent to wait upon him. Believes refused slaves are generally sacrificed, but recollects no instance of it.

He is certain persons convicted of witchcraft, and their innocent relations, would be sacrificed, were the sale of slaves prevented. An old woman accused of witchcraft, or the wife of an accused man, whom he refused, had her head cut off.

Thinks slaves from inland are both bred slaves and convicts. The convict for witchcraft, whose relations he bought, had his head cut off; his father, mother, two wives, and three children, were sold to him on condition they should never return to that country.

Witness examined.—JOHN FOUNTAIN, Esq.

Has resided at Cape Coast Castle, Tantum, and Accra, from 1778, to January 1789.

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On his arrival had the command of the Company's troops ; after that a factor for the Company, then second of Accra, afterwards second of Tantom, and lastly Governor of Tantom.

Did not go into the country farther than in passing from one fort to another.

Is of opinion that the natives become slaves from three causes, principally convicts, others from gaming, witchcraft, also debt.

Witchcraft generally involves the whole family.

The people are very superstitious, a belief in witchcraft is general, but thinks that by it is often meant poison. Is not concerned at present with the African trade. While resident there acquired some knowledge of their government ; thinks if wars had been frequent he must have heard of them ; very few slaves sold off that coast were prisoners of war.

Never knew Europeans foment wars among the Africans ; has known them frequently assist in settling disputes. Never knew villages pillaged for making slaves, which he considers as impracticable by the whites.

Never heard of kidnapping by Europeans, nor conceives that such a practice ever existed, if it did it could not be concealed ; and any European experiencing a loss of trade in consequence would complain to the Governor and Council on the Coast, as well as to persons in England.

When a slave is brought down for sale the owner applies to a broker, who conducts him to a European trader ; should he disagree, they are at liberty to carry him away and offer him to another.

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There are always some free natives, usually called gold-takers, on board the ship while the trade is carrying on.

Says if a slave had been kidnapped he would have had an opportunity of making his complaint; and being himself a Member of the Council, had any such practice prevailed, he must have heard of it.

Never heard of kidnapping by the natives, though it possibly may have existed; apprehends it would be punished, is sure it would upon the Gold Coast.

The natives possess a great number of slaves, which are considered by them as a common medium of traffic. Slaves purchased by the natives may be sold again at their pleasure; but such as have fallen into them by inheritance cannot be sold but by the general consent of the other domestics, unless convicted of crimes. The punishment of a free African convicted of a crime depends upon the offence committed. A man's slave may be seized and sold to make good the fine he has incurred, or debts he may have contracted; but a long process is necessary before he can be deprived of his hereditary slaves. A creditor often prefers seizing one of the family.

A man condemned to slavery, may, in most cases, redeem himself by substituting another, but there are exceptions; if a man should think himself bewitched, and can fix upon the guilty person, he will then sell him under the restriction that he shall not be redeemed.

He knew a late instance in which (Awishee) a man of considerable note, and one of the best traders at Tantom, was said to be bewitched, and a day or two
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after died. The person accused (himself a pynim) with his family, had a formal trial; the result was, the old pynim was sold, and the family driven out of the town. Another instance occurred while he commanded at Tantom; the Cabosheer, a king, was taken ill in the morning, reported to be bewitched, but died before six in the evening. The deceased not being a man of any connection, no inquiry was made; the matter fell to the ground. Has been informed that slaves accused of witchcraft are tried by their own family in conjunction with the hereditary slaves. Freeman by the pynims as above described.

In cases where slaves have been often convicted of ill behaviour, the purchasers are often restrained from redeeming and keeping them in the country.

A man of consequence convicted of adultery not only forfeits his own liberty, but may have many of his slaves also seized; but should the crime be committed by a great man's slave with one of his master's wives, he apprehends he would be put to death.

Human sacrifices are practised in that country. Had been informed at Apollonia by the Governor, who was a respectable man, that he had seen persons seized by surprise in the market place by a rope thrown over their heads, and thus dragged to some distance and executed in various ways. Thus at the death of old Baw and Ammoneer, the two Cabosheers, he believes near 300 had been put to death.

Remembers at Cape Coast, upon the death of Quamina, the Governor sent to the family threatening to fire upon the house, should they attempt to sacrifice any person; but notwithstanding their promise

to the contrary, a boy and girl were knocked on the head, one of which was buried under, the other above, his coffin.

The Governor alluded to above was Dickson, now dead; but believes many in Europe and in Africa know the circumstances to be as related. Believes that from the representations of the whites the practice does not now prevail so much upon the coast as formerly; but inland, it is reported, still to exist in a great degree. Concludes that slaves not saleable are put to death, from an instance of an old woman at Cape Coast Castle, who, on being refused to be bought, to save her maintenance was murdered.

Is of opinion that the purchase of slaves by Europeans preserves their lives, and adds to their ease and comfort. Has for two or three months together had 60 or 70 in the fort at once, who have appeared infinitely happier and healthier than when first purchased, nor did he ever lose one by mortality.

The Dutch, Danes, Portuguese, French, and Americans, traded on the coast while he was there.

The trade of the last has much increased of late; that from America is chiefly carried on from Boston and Salem.

The French have taken possession of a spot adjacent to Anamaboe; and though from the unhealthy situation they have lost many people, they still persevere; sent many more ships than they did.

Trade for slaves is carried on to the eastward of the Gold Coast, from Whidah all along to Old and New Calabar.

Does not know that the English ships have been in the

the practice of leaving the Coast secretly in the night; the general custom is to loose the fore-top sail, hoist the ensign, and fire a gun, often for three, four, or five weeks, as a signal for sailing, that such as have accounts to settle with the captain may come on board. The usual time for getting under way is when the land wind serves from two in the morning.

Thinks that wars among the natives would become rather more frequent, should the slave trade be abolished; because convicts being left in the country would create or foment dissensions among the natives. *Is sure the abolition would be productive of a scene of carnage all along the Coast.*

Never observed any instance of cruelty exercised by the English upon slaves bought by them, but much humanity and particular attention when sick.

The natives are induced to make human sacrifices from various motives, that their friends may rest quiet in their graves, that the deceased should be properly attended. Hence they generally sacrifice his key-bearer or accraw and his head-wench; has besides seen tombs and burial places paved with skulls of persons thus sacrificed.

Slaves are frequently redeemed from the ships, and other substituted in their room, by their families, if their offences have not been great. This most common in the case of adultery, if the offence is not committed with the wife of a great man.

Natives of the Gold Coast, freemen or domestics, no doubt, consider it as a heavy punishment to be sold to the Europeans, especially such as have been resident near the forts, and in the habit of visit-
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ing them; but for those brought from the interior parts of the country, is certain from their own assertion, as well as their general appearance, that they rejoice in their change of masters. They are in general poor in flesh, great eruptions over all their skins, very scrophulous, and frequently have bad ulcers: but when sold again to the captains they are often fat and sleek; sometimes they are brought to the forts in a healthier state; has seen them low and dejected when brought to the fort, and become very chearful in half an hour after they were bought; has been intreated by several to buy them.

Freemen sold for crimes, no doubt, lament their situation, consider it as a heavy punishment, but conscious they have deserved it, seldom complain.

Never heard of such a thing in his life as an African trading ship carrying off free negroes against their inclination. Knew, however, that a man of the name of Griffiths did carry off two people intrusted to his care from St. Andrews, or some part to windward, whom he never brought back. He reported on his return that one or both died of the small-pox; with which the natives not being satisfied, *put him to death*. The act was severely reprobated by the Governor, Council, and Residents, who wrote home about it. This is the only instance he ever heard of.

Witness examined—JAMES FRASER.

Has been twenty years in the African slave trade. Went out first as second mate, afterwards as chief mate, until 1772, when he became commander.

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The number of free men in the country is proportionably small; many find it unsafe to be free, and for protection become voluntary vassals or slaves to some great man.

The families of the persons sold become the slaves of the accuser.

The fines are paid either in slaves, a common medium of payment in purchases of large value, or in goods, or in the proper money of the country, which is a grass cloth.

Debtors unable to pay are liable first to have their slaves seized, then their children, their women next, and, lastly, themselves, if the debt still remains unsatisfied.

The people are professed thieves.

Every article of cultivation in that country has been by the women.

Europeans trading on the coast of Angola for slaves, have factories on shore at Melinta, Calenda, and Laungo, to which the people from the interior parts bring down slaves; a journey of one, two, and sometimes three, months. These they barter for goods, and sometimes return with fresh slaves in a month or six weeks.

Those brought for sale to those factories are commonly of three nations; the Majunbas, supposed to come from a tract of land situated from the equinoctial line to the latitude of three or four degrees south; the Congoes from the kingdom of Congo, supposed to extend from $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 7 degrees south; the Mandungoes from the interior part of the country, and are a long time in coming down to the Coast. They
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are supposed to be cannibals; and when the question has been put to them, *if they eat one another in their country, they owned it, saying it was the sweetest flesh they knew.* Of the Mandungoes few are brought for sale.

As to the Congoes and Majumbas he generally understood that the black traders bought them in the country, and sometimes they were brought down for sale by the original proprietors. The number from those two countries are nearly equal; with this difference, that when a war subsists in either country, there are seldom any slaves brought from the nation at war. Either from the attention of the natives being by that means diverted from every other object, or that the merchants find it dangerous to travel through the country at that time. War is carried on by ambush and surprise rather than by pitched battle in the open field. The captives thus made are sold, and he has had their friends come and redeem such as he had bought, some weeks after. Numbers of slaves are obtained in this way, though but few sold to him; and the proportion of such sold to Europeans, small upon the whole compared to what there may be, upon some other parts of the Coast.

Thinks the greater part sold at Angola were born slaves, because they appear generally chearful and contented, and seldom express any resentment against those who sold them.

Does not know of any slaves obtained by Europeans by force or fraud. He has been applied to by some principal men in the country to assist in seizing as a slave a person who they said was condemned for crimes,

crimes, and had armed himself for defence, but he always refused. Believes, (though has not known any) that cases have happened among the natives of kidnapping each other : the offender in such case, if discovered, would be severely punished, as well by the friends of the person stolen, as by the sovereignty of the country. The black traders come to the forts attended by some of the people on the coast as brokers.

In cases where the assortment of goods has not pleased them, or where the slaves have been refused by the Europeans, has known them sell a few to the people on the coast at very low prices, and carry the rest back ; has seen them sometimes beat, and threaten the refuse slaves, who appeared always anxious to be sold with the rest.

Ships usually give long notice of their intention to sail : the notice given, is loosing the fore-top sail at sun-rising, and firing a gun. Supposes this notice is understood, even by the slaves on board, as well as by the natives. The slaves appear generally impatient to leave the coast. The hour of sailing is indifferently, in the day or night, as the wind serves.

People will pawn their slaves, children, or other relations, to procure goods ; some of the great men will, perhaps, in a fit of passion, order some of their friends to be sold ; those who are obliged to put this order in execution will sometimes deliver the person as a pawn, taking his value in return, putting it thus in the power of the master to redeem the pawn. Captains of ships are sometimes detained two or three days after they are ready to sail, waiting for the redemption

tion of the persons left with them, which, when the friends are unable to do, they will borrow slaves from another vessel that is to remain a longer time upon the coast, and pawn them anew. Has known epidemical distempers conveyed by this means from ship to ship, to the destruction of many slaves. Pawns are always considered as slaves until redeemed; and when their friends refuse, or are unable to redeem them, they are carried off and sold; has sometimes been desired by persons to carry them away, rather than they should be shifted from ship to ship upon the coast.

The greater part of the inhabitants of Bonny are slaves.

Has known no instances of white traders possessing themselves of slaves by fraud or force; detection in such an attempt would be attended, perhaps, with destruction; if not, with a heavy fine.

There is generally a weekly fair at Calabar for slaves; they sell their canoe boys, which the people of Bonny are not permitted to do, even though they may have been brought from the interior country, as they are deemed useful to the country in general.

Many of them appear half starved when brought down for sale; likewise complain of want of provisions, and other hard treatment in their own country; but as officers are not permitted to go up the river, little can be known of the inland country.

Witness examined—Mr. FRANKLYN.

Gilbert Franklyn, Esq., a native of England, came to the West Indies in 1766, where he principally resided in Antigua till the latter end of 1787.

On every plantation, of any magnitude there is a sick house or hospital, with proper attendance for the sick, of whom care is taken; in proof of this he relates that previous to the capture of Tobago, part of the soldiers, from an unhealthy situation, became sickly and ulcerated in their legs. That in consequence, as fresh-meat provisions were difficult to procure, the gentlemen of the island subscribed money to purchase and supply them, *and that several took the soldiers into the negro hospitals, where they received the same care and attention as the negroes did: they found the benefit from it they expected.*

Midwives attend the lying-in women; medical advice and assistance is given other negroes when sick. Persons of medical skill are annually retained to take care of the negroes; if they fail in their attendance several times in a week, or to attend when sent for, they are discharged.

The negroes in general have very comfortable houses. Manager's kind behaviour to his negroes, so as to gain their affections, while he makes them do his business, is to him, and he believes to most people, a higher recommendation than his skill as a planter. One of the first things enquired into is his character in that respect: no person would employ a manager of a cruel character, believing him to be such; such treatment is scarcely possible to be practised in secrecy.

He does not believe the poor of any country live happier than the negroes on the plantations in the West Indies; in many cases they have an evident superiority; their labour is slight; good care is taken
of

of them in sickness and in health, and they have no occasion to fear the distresses of their children from inability to labour; but then they certainly have not those means of bettering their conditions which many English poor of industry and genius avail themselves; perhaps, therefore, a proper comparison cannot be drawn. He thinks their lot in general to be envied by the poor of all the countries he has seen.

A negro, properly speaking, considering the distinction of master and slave, cannot be said to have property.

Opinion, however, and the conduct of masters, secures them whatever they possess in the West Indies, in a manner more secure than, perhaps, in any other part of the world. No master dares violate their personal property without being exposed to detestation and contempt. Even when the master is ruined, and the negroes, with his other effects, sold to satisfy his creditors, their property, though very considerable, is inviolably preserved to them; they carry their money and goods to the plantation of them who buys them. Their plantation ground is not exchanged without making them a compensation for the crop on it. When they die they distribute their effects among their relations and friends without control. Negroes generally conceal their money, and do not chuse to be thought rich. He had himself a negro who bought out the freedom of his wife from a lady at Montserrat at the price of near 80*l.*, and in her name possessed two houses at Tobago; he believes he was worth 6 or 700*l.* He asked for his freedom, and on his alledging that his property might be lost to him in case of

his wife's death, obtained it from the witness, who had before endeavoured to dissuade him from his request. There is reason to believe he has since lost above half what he was worth. Many of the negroes are possessed of a great deal of property.

He cannot tell the amount, but almost all the small current money of the islands is in the possession of the negroes. A slave he had at Tobago took with him from thence to Grenada about 100l. sterling. He gave 20l. of it to a sister at Grenada to help to purchase her freedom, and sent forty guineas to Tobago to buy a negroe.

He believes it is not common for slaves themselves to be masters of slaves; few owners would allow it. He knows only the instance he has named.

He does not know how a proprietor is to supply his male negroes with wives, if no Africans are to be bought.

He conceives it not improbable that the negroes now in the West Indies would be very unhappy if they understood that no more new negroes were to be brought among them. Those under his care, on the arrival of a cargo, always solicited more help; the young men particularly desire to have wives bought for them.

An abolition of the trade on the part of Great Britain would only operate partially, and not prevent other nations from carrying it on. The public proclamations and encouragements of France and Spain to their subjects sufficiently prove their desire to extend their slave trade. It follows also from their opening ports in the West Indies and South America to
slaves

slaves imported in foreign vessels, and particularly from the contracts of the French with British merchants to supply their ships with negroes on the coast of Africa.

Witness examined — Sir ASHTON WARNER BY-AM, *His Majesty's Attorney General for Grenada and its dependencies.*

Lived in Antigua from 1765 to 1770, when he went to St. Vincent, bought an estate, and lived till 1774, when he went and resided as Solicitor General at Grenada till its capture in 1779; lived the rest of the war in St. Vincent, Tobago, and Antigua; from 1783 till June 1789 resided as Attorney General in Grenada.

Compared with the punishments in England on the same offences, he thinks the criminal slave laws far from severe.

Whipping and confinement are the only punishments by the master or manager which are considered as legal. The quantity of punishment will undoubtedly vary with the master's disposition; but any abuse of the master's power was always considered punishable by indictment or information. If such abuse was frequent he never knew it; and considering the nature of the master's power, and the variety of persons who may acquire it, he has always thought abuses of it not more frequent than similar abuses of power in England. (The slaves comfort, in this respect, depends as much on his owner's temper as that of the English apprentice does on his master's

ter's temper). Thinks the comfort of the apprentice and the slave depends on the temper of their respective masters, not exactly in the same proportion. In the few cases where he has had occasion to prosecute for such abuses in the Court of King's Bench, *Court and Juries always appeared desirous of bringing the offenders to exemplary punishments.*

In general thinks the West-India laws sufficient to protect slaves in life and limb, though he has no doubt some may escape who have abused their power over their slaves. When he was Solicitor General, in 1775 or 1776, *a white man was executed for murdering a slave either his or in his service.* A motion in arrest of judgement was made on the ground, that the culprit ought not to suffer death for killing a slave; and a contrary practice having subsisted in some of the old islands, the prisoner had counsel, and the point was solemnly argued; after which the Court decided, he thinks unanimously, that it was no ground for arrest of judgement, and sentence was passed. Lawyers hardly had any doubts about it, and he considered the Court's having it argued as a tenderness to the prisoner, and to remove any such doubt. Believes since then no one has doubted that a criminal would suffer for the murder of a slave exactly as for that of a free person. Labour is most certainly proportioned to the age and strength of the negroes; but he thinks the sex makes no difference in field work. General practice for invalids, and women some months gone with child, to be put to slight work, as weeding, &c., as much for their health as for their work.

Con-

Conjectures that some works in England must be severer than any done by the slaves.

By the late Grenada act, proprietors are obliged to allot land to their slaves, and guardians are appointed to inspect each estate's provision grounds.

Negroes have usually surplus produce, except, perhaps, a very few idle ones, probably in all gangs. He recollects no instance of a master's interfering with the property his slave has acquired by selling such surplus.

Cannot remember particular instances and sums, but from the Sunday clothing of industrious slaves, and their comfortable furniture, has no doubt many acquire and spend yearly at least from 10l. to 20l. sterling, which they lay out openly on luxuries and comforts.

Believes King's ships and merchantmen are chiefly supplied with vegetables, poultry, &c., by negroes on their own account.

Has always heard severity deemed a reproach to a manager, and as likely to preclude him from employment.

Industrious slaves are happily situated, and they appear perfectly contented.

He was well informed of a slave who accidentally lost half his foot, and was sent by his master to the Coast of Africa, whence he came, and found many relations; *but the slave refused to stay, returned to Grenada, and continued, as a slave, with his master.* Cannot now state all the circumstances with accuracy. Thinks it must have been before 1779.

He scruples not to give his opinion that slaves in general

general have fewer wants unsatisfied, enjoy more comforts, and are freer from fear of want than the English labourer; and not having those ideas which would make their state intolerable to Britons, do not feel the pain people are apt to think from their degradation in society.

Witness examined — ALEXANDER CAMPBELL,
Esq.

He resided in the West Indies from 1754 to 1763. Has since spent about half his time there. Left the West Indies June 1788.

Negroes are fed differently in different islands. The work of field negroes much easier than the common labour here. In Grenada, where estates are large, and they have much new ground, they have as much land as they can work to maintain themselves and sell the surplus, as it has been universally considered the greatest benefit to a planter that his slaves should have plenty; and the more money they got, the more attached they were. They have an afternoon weekly to work their grounds, and the manager or overseer calls over the list twice a day to see who were in their grounds, and always on Sunday mornings nine o'clock, when the negroes were ordered into their grounds, except such as had passports to go to market or to go to church, or to see their countrymen, which he never knew refused when there was occasion. The managers sometimes, and the overseers twice weekly viewed the negroe gardens, and always gave an allowance, and often farther time, to those whose gardens

dens were neglected, or when there was not sufficient food in them. If negroes had not sufficient grounds they would rob their neighbours, and might revolt; and it is of the greatest consequence that all the negroes be properly fed. As some were not so attentive to their interests as others, the Grenada legislature passed a law for inspecting negro grounds in 1766, and another in 1778, inserted in the Privy Council's report. Negroes may raise poultry and hogs, and sell them for the best price they can get. They are forced to labour at their own grounds.

They raise for their own use, or for sale, in Grenada and the ceded islands, plantanes and fig-bananas, cassadas, yams, &c.; and also cabbages, shallots, &c.; pine-apples, water-melons, &c. Every one of these the negroes have in their ground set some time or other of the year. Very little labour in planting them, and they only require two or three weedings, which can be done by the children. Plantanes are very fruitful, three or four weedings the only cultivation required. The negroes need not work half their allowed time in their gardens, and that only out of crop, as the rains set not in till May or June; before which they cannot plant.

In general the negroes sell provisions, poultry, and hogs. A slave who makes proper use of his time, may sell produce to the value of from 7l. to 15l. sterling yearly. Some industrious negroes who have good land often sell from 30l. to 40l. sterling. Slaves with children have a greater proportion of land than
single

single slaves, and he believes in the ceded islands half the current specie is the property of the negroes.

Negroes are naturally fond of gay dress, and though allowed sufficient working day cloaths, they buy fine cloaths for Sundays. It is very common in Grenada and the Ceded Islands to see field negroes in white dimity jackets and breeches, and fine Holland shirts; and women in muslins, and four or five India muslin handkerchiefs on their heads at eight or ten shillings each. He has often seen slaves give feasts to 100 or 200 other slaves, with every rarity and wines, which he could not have given for 60l. sterling; and they very often borrow their masters plate and linen to entertain their friends. These feasts are very frequent among the slaves. When large hogs are killed by the plantation negroes, they are commonly sold to the rest in small quantities.

Negroes with families, or single ones who wish for houses, are assisted by their masters to build them; they are commonly from twenty-five to thirty feet long, from twelve to fifteen broad, the sides and tops covered with wild cane, and thatched with cane tops; they are warmer, drier, and esteemed healthier than if boarded; at one end there is a hog-pen, outside; and at the other a hen-roost.

Knows no where a greater proportion of able, experienced, medical men, than in the West Indies: there are about forty in Grenada, where they are allowed 7s. 6d. currency for each slave, young and old, and paid besides for fractures and operations, and 20s. currency per head for inoculation. Sick slaves are immediately sent into the hospital, where two nurses
always

always attend to nurse and give them physic. The Doctor, if not resident, always visits them thrice a week, and oftener if necessary; and the owner or manager, and chief nurse, examine all the sick every morning. The hospitals are conveniently divided; there is one on every estate obliged by law to be properly kept. Wine and every necessary is generally found for the sick. Believes the plantation hospitals in Grenada are generally as well attended as those in England. If the least sore appears on a negroe's leg he is laid up, as it is difficult to cure sores without confinement.

Negroes are regularly fed in the hospital; they often remain a day or two in the hospital with only a dry skin.

In Grenada all Creoles, and most new negroes, are Christians, being generally christened two or three years after their arrival; they often read the service over their dead; they often attend the churches, English and Catholic; the clergy by law must christen them gratis, and certain times yearly visit and instruct them.

In case of the abolition, the slaves, sensible that part of the lands growing into brush and wood would be unhealthy, and their labour would be harder, would despond; buying new negroes makes the slaves happy, as easing them, and affording them wives.

His reasons for thinking, that if this country abolish the slave trade, the other European nations would carry it on and extend it. The French, whose West-India colonies are not one half cultivated, have granted bounties on slaves, and the ships carrying them.

them. Spain could buy slaves cheaper, were Great Britain to abolish the trade.

Witness examined—JAMES BAILLIE, Esq.

Resident in the West Indies about sixteen years at different times.

Punishments not severe when compared with the discipline of the army or navy.

Greatest attention is used to prevent the separation of slaves, connected either by relationship or friendship.

Never knew slaves express a desire to return home. Slaves in Grenada are generally Christians, and in a state of comfort and happiness.

Recollects negro freemen marrying slaves, though they know the children of such marriage will be born slaves. Introduction of new slaves cannot be prevented by any regulation in this country.

France pays a bounty on the importation of slaves into her colonies, amounting nearly to 7l. per head. Number of seamen in the French West-India trade believes is upwards of 50,000. Thinks the number imported from Africa to her West-India islands by France must exceed 20,000.

Spain is giving every possible encouragement for the pursuit of the trade in her own colonies. Insurances are now making on Guineamen from Boston, Virginia, and Charlestown South Carolina. A considerable number of Guineamen will be fitted out from Copenhagen the instant the trade is abolished in this country. Is of opinion that the gross value of the
West.

West-India and African trade together exceed seven millions sterling per annum.

Is of opinion, that if an abolition of the slave trade was to take place for a few years only it could not be recovered.

The abolition of the trade would throw slaves in the West Indies into a state of discontent and despondency. Every fresh importation is highly acceptable to them.

Abolition will produce disorder among the white inhabitants, and alienate their affections.

The Danish government have given every possible encouragement to the introducing the Christian religion among their slaves ; and if the government was to pay more attention to the instruction of slaves their morals might be very much improved, and it might in the end prove a greater security to the welfare of the West-India islands than people in general are aware of*.

Witness examined—Mr. JOHN CASTLES.

Resided in Grenada from 1766 to 1788 (excepting one year) as a surgeon till the last two years.

Condition of the negroes much more comfortable than that of the labouring poor in England.

Brought two negro slaves to England, who, after

* In Grenada the slaves found there on its cession to us were all baptised, and continue in the practice of the Roman-Catholic religion ; and it has an exceeding good effect upon their morals. In the old English islands, and in St. Vincent and Dominique, negroes shamefully neglected as to religion.

staying about three months, begged to return. Said they did not like this country; it was dull. They pined after their dances and other customs. He sent them both home, where they remain contented. They were exceedingly struck with the number of beggars in the streets, and used to say, “Buccra not good.”

Witness examined—JOHN GREG, Esq.

Was in the West Indies for about twenty years from the year 1764. Was in each of the Ceded Islands two or three times each year; twice in Jamaica, at Antigua, Hispaniola, Martinique, and St. Lucia; but resided mostly in Dominique. Secretary to the King's commission, and auctioneer in disposing of the lands in the Ceded Islands.

Has observed negroes in all the islands much happier in general than the lower class of people in England. Recollects to have seen no beggars or deserted slaves.

Besides common causes of mortality, negro women plunge in rivers when hot; and immediately after labour, and under other improper circumstances, put on wet cloaths, which bring on complaints unfavourable to propagation. All possible means have been attempted to counteract the several causes of mortality.

Witness examined—JAMES TOBIN, Esq.

Has lived ten or twelve years in the West Indies at different times, chiefly in Nevis. Has often been in St. Kitt's, and occasionally in most other English and
some

some French islands. Knows the manner of cultivating West-Indian estates, and has an estate in Nevis.

Negroes houses are built by themselves with the masters help, with at least two rooms, one to sleep in, the other for common use. Many of their houses have three or four rooms, with cook rooms detached.

The houses are generally thatched and wattled, and many plastered; but many head negroes, particularly in St. Kitt's, have boarded and shingled houses: they sleep on raised benches, spread with matts and blankets.

On all estates there are regular sick nurses, and generally a surgeon employed by the year. Sick slaves have sago, portable soup, wine, fresh meat, &c. Poultry and mutton are often killed to make them broth. He knew a convalescent slave have sixteen lambs, each worth two dollars, killed for his use.

Knows in Nevis that a pecuniary reward is given to the mother on rearing her child to be two years old, and that freedom from all labour is granted to every negro woman who is the mother of six working children.

From reading and from conversing with men well acquainted with Africa, and from occasional conversations with Africans themselves, has every reason to think that their situation is better generally in the West Indies than it was in their own country; and it is very singular that there never was an instance of a negro, (even an African), who had obtained his freedom, ever returning to Africa, or even expressing a wish to do so. This has been said to arise from the
con-

connections they have made in the West Indies ; and if so, it proves that they can form connections there, equally if not more agreeable to them than those they quitted. It is a general mistake to suppose that negroes in the West Indies are very anxious to procure their freedom ; if so, many of them could buy their freedom with the money they save. Has known freedom offered to slaves on the most moderate terms, and refused, because they should lose their friends and protectors. Has little doubt but those negroes could have bought their freedom at the sum proposed ; is positive in one instance, as he (the slave) has bought his son's freedom, and slaves for his son's use, himself (who was a fisherman) still remaining a slave.

It is very common for free negroes to marry (in their sense of the word) women slaves, though they know that their offspring would be slaves.

The protection enjoyed by the slaves in these two islands (Nevis and St. Kitt's) was that of the laws of England. He does not recollect any colonial laws in Nevis interfering with these. In St. Kitt's he believes there is a law to punish the maiming of slaves, passed in 1783.

Apprehends it to have been the general opinion that the English law extended to slaves in Nevis and St. Kitt's. Instances proceedings in Nevis in the case of a supposed murder of a negro by two white men, carried on, as he apprehends, under the laws of England ; and another of a white overseer, supposed to have wantonly murdered a negro of the estate he lived on, who was capitally indicted and tried ; but the proofs not appearing satisfactory,
found

found guilty of manlaughter—sentenced to a year's imprisonment.

Supposes an African cannot lay by a sum to buy his freedom. A short time after his importation the profligate and incorrigible are generally apt to run away, to sell their cloaths, and to neglect the food allowed them : are often loitering about the towns and strolling along the bays and sea-side half naked, and apparently half starved ; and from such wretches he thinks the state of the slaves in the islands has been described and published in England, by people who have transiently visited them, without knowing the management of estates, and the treatment of the slaves.

Three persons have been tried, convicted, and punished, for ill treating their own slaves, under the common law of England, in St. Kitt's ; and of such convictions authentic transcripts have been sent home for the information of the House of Commons. Such documents evince how much the police of Nevis and St. Kitt's has been misrepresented by assertions, that in those islands there was no law to interpose between the tyranny of the planters and their defenceless slaves.

The slaves neither before nor after the surrender of Nevis to the French shewed any disposition to revolt, but quite the contrary.

In St. Kitt's, when attacked by the French in 1782, the slaves eagerly desired arms to defend their masters' property ; and on some estates, where the whites were insulted by the French soldiers, the negroes took the most ample and savage revenge.

Witness examined — THOMAS NORBURY
KERBY, Esq.

A native of Antigna; left it in 1762, returned February 1780; still staid until July 1788; was a Member of Assembly till early in 1784; then received a mandamus from home to a seat at the Council.

Remembers a slave giving 200*l.* for his freedom. Also knows many who spend annually from 10*l.* to 16*l.*

Every estate has an hospital for the sick, who are attended by a medical man and proper nurses; supplied with every requisite, and never sent to work without the doctor's sanction. A doctor is constantly employed at a certain rate for each slave; attends twice a week; is liable to be sent for whenever necessary; paid also for fractures, midwifery, venereals, &c.

Thinks the slave enjoys full as many comforts as the English labourer, in some respects more, as he is sure of being taken care of in sickness; and has not the anxiety of providing, perhaps, for a wife and young family.

Recollects another slave worth 180*l.*, partly inherited; considerable part got by his industry; he thinks because he was a valuable tradesman, and had constant employ. He who gave as mentioned 200*l.* for his freedom was a mason.

When he spoke of many slaves spending from 10*l.* to 16*l.* per annum, he alluded to field as well as house slaves. The last acquire their property from selling
their

their stock, roots and fruits. These sell at a moderate price, compared with the same or similar articles here.

While he lived in the West Indies, he often knew the slaves provisions, as well as the masters, much hurt by bad weather and winds; the slaves in that case have an extra allowance.

The slave commonly gets his property by selling his produce; allowed grain and stock, and from his industry in the time allowed him to rest, has often known slaves earn half a crown a day as porters, particularly Sunday, that being considered as entirely his own.

It certainly was generally understood that slaves were protected by the common law of England. A slave of his had been ill treated by a young man without any provocation; he thought it his duty to apply to a magistrate. The man was bound over; but through some of his friends the matter was made up at the particular request of the slave, to whom he made satisfactory recompence; but for this he should certainly have prosecuted him to the utmost. The slave was a cooper; and coming home from St. John's the young man very wantonly rode against him; and on the slave's remonstrating, beat him.

The slave applied to him directly.

The Moravian and Methodist preachers have applied themselves very zealously and successfully to the conversion of the negroes in Antigua; and having built proper meeting houses, all the slaves are encouraged by their masters to attend.

The general effect on the converts has been a more decent behaviour and religious attendance, and most are become Christians.

Before the Moravians and Methodists came to the island the negroes very generally attended all the churches, and they considered themselves as influenced to pursue the doctrine they heard; but from their having had greater attention paid them by the Methodists and Moravians, he thinks they are much more enlightened than they were.

Witness examined—Doctor SAMUEL ATHILL.

Was born in Antigua. First left it in 1764; returned to it in 1779. Was in the Assembly five years; and appointed Counsellor in 1786.

Practised physic there, and attended from 8 to 9000 negro slaves; are often long lived in Antigua; never knew a slave abandoned by his owner, because unfit for labour from age or disease.

An able field slave watches canes, &c. An old slave sometimes lives in the negro grounds and plantain walks to guard them; in that case his hut is made much more durable and comfortable than the common watch-houses.

Slave have the entire power of what they get by their industry; never heard of an owner interfering in any degree with the property of a slave so acquired.

From the observations he has made of the labour, treatment, and general state of the slaves in Antigua, he scruples not to declare, that he thinks the negro
and

and his family happier, and much freer from care and misery, than the peasantry in many parts of this country.

Formerly, he believes, the slaves thought little of religion, and few were christians; many now attend churches and meetings, and most are baptised from the settling of Moravian and Methodist teachers in the island; the former have two good chapels, are attentive to their duty, and lead exemplary lives. Has heard the slaves instructed at Methodist meetings to be attentive and obedient to their masters, with other good advice: never knew the regular clergy pay any particular attention to them.

Witness examined—JOHN WEDDERBURN, Esq.

Is a native of Great Britain; has lived between twenty-six and twenty-seven years in Jamaica; left it the beginning of last May; was a planter, and had property there; had care of several plantations of full 5000 negroes.

Thinks they are treated with humanity; are in general in a happy state; are attended when sick by a doctor, who prescribes every medicine proper for them; have proper nurses; often provisions of the best sort from owners or overseers table. They have often also wine, and whatever other necessary the doctor thinks proper. Has known, in dangerous cases, the medicines given by whites, who often lose their nights' rest by it. Negroes, by age or infirmities, incapable of labour, mostly live in a comfortable negro house; have every allowance and attendance as

if still of the greatest value ; are still fed and clothed ; never knew one such discarded by his master.

The Africans have a remarkable saying in their disputes, to shew that the stronger can take no advantage of them : “ This no for we country, this for “ Buccra country, Buccra country every body have “ right :” i. e. in their own country, the stronger often use the weaker as they please, whether justly or not.

The negroes have lands to cultivate for their sole benefit ; raise much more provisions than they use, and sell poultry, hogs, and various kinds of fruit, and have the profits. Many might be rich ; numbers spend their money in fine clothes, and salt meat from England ; others buy cows and heifers. Has known, on different estates, from ten to forty taken care of promiscuously with their master’s, who take no part : they sell them when they will ; he has bought from different negroes young steers, and paid them from 10l. to 13l. per head.

He has known different negroes wish to buy their freedom, themselves and a few friends possessed of money sufficient. Recollects an estate where there were 300 slaves ; the owner in easy circumstances, before the hurricane of 1780 ; by that calamity, other storms, and perhaps some little imprudence, became embarrassed : a writ was issued, the Marshal came to the estate to secure him, and left it disappointed. In the evening, a few of the chief negroes came to their master, told him what they had heard, and brought him between two and three hundred pounds ; he refused it with thanks.

Thinks

Thinks an African's constitution perfectly well adapted to bear heat; never knew a slave in health complain of it. Pleurifies are often got by being out at nights; the healthiest and stoutest field slaves are more subject to them than others; has known many very fine valuable ones die of them. The owner generally prevents these nocturnal rambles as much as possible.

Never knew but one free negro desire to return to Africa; he went to see his friends, and returned again: as far as he can recollect, he was a Gold Coast slave.

If an act of Parliament, for abolishing the slave trade, should only transfer that benefit to other nations, the Africans would not be benefited, nor the cause of humanity advanced, as far as he is capable of judging.

Is convinced the slaves there would suffer exceedingly, as their labour would be naturally increased: thinks it would tend to depopulate Jamaica, lessen its cultivation, and prevent its improvement.—Thinks it would not be attended with satisfaction to the planters, and other whites there; is confident it would produce alarming discontents.

Witness

Witness examined—GEORGE HIBBERT, Esq.
a Merchant in London.

The Inspector General of Imports and Exports, has stated to the Privy Council the imports from the West Indies to Great Britain, in 1787, at

	£.	s.	d.
	4,945,387	19	10
And from the West Indies, in 1787, was exported to	£.	s.	d.
Ireland, value	127,585	4	5
The U. S. of America - -	196,460	8	0
British Colonies in America	100,506	17	10
Foreign West Indies - - -	18,245	12	6
Africa - - -	868	15	0
	443,666 17 9		
Grand total - -	5,389,054 17 7		

The Inspector General states these to be mercantile values, formed on the prices current published at Lloyd's.

This trade employed 1,815 vessels, 242,721 tons, and 21,114 seamen. That the exports from Great Britain to the West Indies in 1787, in British goods, &c. amounted to 1,638,703l. 13s. 1d.; and from Ire-

Ireland, besides what is shipped in vessels cleared out from Great Britain, 20,160l.

The witness believes the annual average of slaves imported and retained in the British West Indies, may be 15,657, amounting, at 35l. per head, to 547,995l. The Inspector General has also stated the quantities, and Custom House values of imports from the West Indies to Great Britain only in 1788, whence he has, with all the care and exactness he could, estimated their gross mercantile value, (taking the opinion of experienced brokers) on the average prices of that year, and which, on a very moderate computation, amounts to 6,800,000l., of which he finds that the Customs and Excise received about £.

1,800,000

Ship-owners, for home freight - 560,000

British merchants, and brokers for commissions - - - 232,000

Wharfingers, including primage or freight, about - 95,000

Under-writers, for insurance - 150,000

The whole of which is 2,837,000

The rest, being something less than 4 millions, is the net proceeds passed to the credit of the planters by the British merchant, but from which must be farther deducted the value of British goods exported to the Plantations, with freight, insurance, commission, and port charges thereon; also the sum paid the Africans annually for slaves; and when to this is added the interest of the debt due from the Colonies

nies to Great Britain, there can be no doubt that the whole 6,800,000l. rested in Great Britain.

Witness examined—Admiral SHULDHAM.

Lord Shuldham (Admiral) has observed the behaviour of masters to their negro slaves, in the islands where he has commanded, to have been mild, gentle, and indulgent, equal to that generally shewn by masters to their servants in this kingdom. The slaves were decently clothed, and properly for the climate, and seemed perfectly satisfied with their victuals and lodging.

He never heard them make any complaint; they are in all respects perfectly satisfied; so that when a midshipman, he envied their condition, and often wished to be in the same situation.

Witness examined—Admiral BARRINGTON.

Admiral Barrington has observed, that the masters, in the islands where he has commanded, have always behaved to their slaves with the greatest humanity, and more labour did not seem to be required of them than they could properly bear. They are in general perfectly satisfied with their condition, so much so, that when being miserable himself, (from being four months Commander in Chief, without an opportunity of revenging the insults of France) he has seen them so happy, that he wished himself a negro; but when he had his full revenge, he never wished himself a negro afterwards.

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The British West-India trade is, no doubt, a considerable nursery for seamen: he holds it by all means important to keep and encourage the slave trade; its abolition will tend to reduce the West-India trade, and consequently to lessen the number of ships and seamen.

In the last war he was three months at Barbadoes, and on shore every day, where he had continual opportunities of observing the situation of the negroes, and conduct of their masters: he never knew any act of cruelty by the owners on their slaves, nor ever saw a punishment but one, which was that of a negro woman by her own husband.

The slaves in Barbadoes are more comfortably lodged, and much cleaner, than the labouring people of Ireland; and in general in the West Indies, they appeared happier than the labouring poor in Ireland and many parts of Great Britain.

Witness examined—Admiral MARTIN ARBUTHNOT.

Admiral Arbuthnot having commanded on the West-India station, has been frequently in plantations both in St. Kitt's and Jamaica, and never observed the least cruelty to slaves; has seen them punished, but neither inhumanly nor wantonly, and by no means so severely as a British soldier or sailor: they are clothed according to the climate, and fed with the utmost ease, having ground allotted for that purpose, besides other provisions from America, and constantly from England: in point of lodging

and accommodation, they are better off than the labouring poor in Ireland. No more labour is required of them than they can properly bear: their labour is not equal to that of seamen in a man of war, in heaving down or clearing. So far are they from a desponding state, that they have as joyous moments as any of us.

Witness examined—Admiral HOTHAM.

Admiral William Hotham has known the West Indies from a boy, and never found the conduct of masters to slaves otherwise than very proper: the treatment of slaves was mild and humane; they seemed properly fed, clothed, and lodged: he never thought more labour was required of them than they could properly bear: they did not appear desponding, but very well satisfied with their condition, and always very chearful.

Witness examined—Captain ROBERT LAMBERT.

Has served in the West-Indies at different times eight or nine years, particularly in Jamaica; he served first in a King's ship, afterwards as Commissioner at Port Royal. He never observed ill usage to the slaves, but thought they generally seemed happy, and saw nothing to the contrary of their being properly fed, clothed, and lodged; it did not appear to him that more labour was required of them than they could properly bear, always saw them chearful after leaving work; thinks he sees more desponding people

ple in this country than among the negroes. The British West-India trade forms a considerable nursery of seamen in time of war; he never had any other means of recruiting his ships, than from West-Indians: imagines it highly important to keep up and encourage the West-India trade.

The abolition of the slave trade would undoubtedly tend to lessen the West-India trade, and the number of ships and seamen; were the slave trade abolished, it would not be possible to prevent the running of new slaves into the islands.

Witness examined—Commodore GARDNER.

Commodore Allan Gardener served in the West-India islands, and returned from Jamaica August 1789. No more labour required of the negroes than they can properly bear; a labouring man in England does twice the work of a negro; thinks them not in a desponding state as in this country; there are some constitutionally of a melancholy turn; from their chearfulness out of work time, and readiness to engage in diversions, he believes them perfectly satisfied with their condition. The British West-Indian trade is a nursery for seamen, and extremely advantageous for supplying men in time of war; it is important to keep up and encourage it, so long as the islands are thought worth keeping; he considers, if the slave trade be abolished, there is an end of the colonies, as the negroes are the very sinews of the planter.

Witness

Witness examined—Lord MACARTNEY.

Lord Macartney was upwards of three years in the West Indies, as Governor of Grenada, the Grenadines and Tobago, from 1776 to 1779. Treatment of negroes there depends much on the temper of the master, whose behaviour is greatly regulated by his own interest, connected with the well being of his slave; thinks in general their behaviour is mild and humane; has heard of a very few bad examples, but not known them; a bad master is always much despised by his fellow-planters.

Slaves in general seem properly fed, clothed, and lodged; interest of master and exertion of slave, are so connected with these things, that great attention is always paid to them, thinks no more labour required of slaves than they can well bear; some parts of cultivation require more labour than others, but thinks a labouring man in England works full as much as a negro. He believes many slaves, after having been some little time in our islands, would not go back if they could.

Does not recollect the laws of the island give any effectual remedy to a slave against his Master; one fact of remedy he knows, viz. a little before his arrival; a white man was hanged for murdering a black woman; he repeats, that in general he believes slaves are not ill used, it being contrary to the interest of their master.

He conceives the state of a negro, exclusive of liberty, which is a sentiment felt by every Englishman,
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and which few negroes feel to the same extent, to be very comfortable ; being in general well fed, well clothed, taken care of when sick, and having every thing provided for him ; he fears no creditors, which on the whole renders his state, exclusive of the idea of being a slave, perhaps as comfortable as a peasant in this country.

Witness examined—Sir JOHN DALLING.

Sir John Dalling Bart. resided as soldier and Governor in Jamaica, off and on, from the taking of the Havannah till 1781. Great attention is paid by masters to slaves ; the worst master is the freed negro. Treatment of slaves is in general mild and humane, particularly of the field negroes ; they are well fed, and though sometimes unfavourable seasons make a scarcity, the planters, from humanity, as well as interest, seek provisions for them at any expence ; their clothing and lodging are well adapted to the climate. The general work of negroes is not to be called labour, according to the acceptation of the word here ; a well-regulated plantation is not an unpleasant object to the eye and mind ; great attention is paid them in sickness ; and in old age they are put to slight work ; a desponding negro is generally a being that, from refractoriness or disinclination, does not chuse to work ; among such numbers, there must be many of an ungovernable temper as among us ; in the military line the disgusting punishments are generally divided among 20 or 30, in a regiment from 500 to 700 men ; a well-minded negro looks forward to something better than
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his present state; that they are in general satisfied, may appear from their not having been incited to desolation and murder long before this period, by the public conduct of this country, which has doubtless been exaggerated to them through divers channels.

Witness examined—Sir RALPH PAYNE, K. B.

Sir Ralph Payne, very early in life, visited the West Indies, twice, to see his friends and the property he was afterwards to possess. In the latter end of 1771, (which was a few years after) he returned thither as Governor General of the Leeward Islands; continued there almost four years, until June 1775, and occasionally visited the principal islands under his government.

The management of slaves, in the island he governed, seemed wise and humane; they most unquestionably appeared in general properly fed, clothed, and lodged; more labour never seemed required of them than they could properly bear; he trusts he may ever, without being contradicted, there is no slave (ot least he never saw one) whose labour is by any means comparable to that of a day-labourer in England; this opinion may be supported by slaves having better health and spirits in crop time than in any other, and being best pleased with the labour attending it, though the severest they have.

General appearance of negroes does not indicate despondency, nor does he believe they are more dissatisfied with their state than the bulk of mankind, in their respective stations: it is very common for them

them to perform their labour singing, and with an appearance of gaiety ; their necessities are supplied, and their situation has every appearance of comfort.

When visiting the islands as Governor, no act of cruelty from masters to slaves came to his knowledge or hearing ; the interest of the master is generally thought to be, and certainly is, a security for the good usage of the slave.

From his knowledge of the Judges and Magistrates, he is confident slaves and white persons would meet with equal redress for any cruelty sustained by them ; this, he fears, is much more doubted in England than in the colonies : he never heard a doubt expressed by any reasonable man, but that a master would be equally tried for his life for the murder of a slave, as for that of a white man.

He cannot say whether, on his estates, lying-in women were delivered in their own huts, or in rooms for the purpose : there are hospitals on both of them, as well as, he believes, on every other estate in the islands, which he believes are attended with all possible care. A physician constantly attended on his, and he believes on all others, twice or thrice a week, who, besides his regular stipend, was, he believes, paid extraordinarily for cases of midwifery, inoculations, and on all extraordinary occasions.

The field negroes have certainly more or less property of their own : as to their industry, that is matter of opinion, but those who are industrious are sure to be comfortable.

Witness examined—Sir ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL.

Sir Archibald Campbell resided three years, in the war before last, in the French islands of Martinique, Guadaloupe, and Dominique, after the conquest of those islands, in a military capacity : he resided also in Jamaica five years during the last war ; two of these he was Governor.

The conduct of masters towards their slaves seemed mild, and marked with great kindness. Slaves appeared properly fed, clothed, and lodged : he had no opportunity of ascertaining whether more labour was required of them than they could properly perform ; but understands it to be the master's interest not to give them more than they can bear.

They appeared comfortable and satisfied with their state : heard no complaints to the contrary : cannot compare their condition with that of the labouring poor of England, not being able to judge of the labour here.

Advertisements for runaway slaves often describe the negroes by marks of brands, but these he understood to be marks of their own country ; and his reason for thinking so is, that all new negroes imported while he was in Jamaica, had their particular country marks ; these he does not mean to say were received in the interior country from which they originally came, but made in Africa previous to their exportation thence ; he never saw them appear fresh ; understood all such marks to have been made in Africa, before they came to the island, but where he

he never heard. He understood that the tribes in Africa distinguish themselves by tatooing or impressing marks on their faces and bodies.

When the Maroon negroes made their treaty with governor Trelawny in 1739, he has heard they amounted 3000 men fit for arms; during his government he endeavoured to get all the fighting men in their towns to turn out when Jamaica was threatened by the French and Spaniards, and was surpris'd to find they did not amount to 300.

He never knew Maroons hire themselves to field labour.

There are great numbers of free negroes in the towns and different parishes of the island; in general they are idle and dissipated: does not know, but thinks they had matrimonial connections with negro women on the plantations. He thinks it very probable that these connections were formed in order to derive subsistence from the wives, and to live in idleness themselves.

He ascribes the decrease of the Maroon negroes chiefly to a free access to spirits: they have women among them, and have wives. Another cause of their decrease he has heard is their cohabitation with the women of the neighbouring plantations. He understands they are daily decreasing, cannot say in what proportion. The decrease from 3000 men in 1739, to 300 in 1782, extends only to fighting men:

Witness examined—JOHN ORDE, Esq. (*now a Baronet.*)

John Orde, Esq. (Sir J. Orde) had been at Jamaica three years as midshipman and lieutenant in the navy, and near six years at Dominique as governor; it is seven months since his return to England; in the islands where he has been, has observed the treatment of slaves in general humane and good; their labour, he thinks, not greater than that of a common labourer in England; that of the hedger and ditcher he thinks full as great.

When sick they are well taken care of; many estates have hospitals for them; some have medical people living on them; and almost all are attended by the faculty once or twice a week, or oftener if necessary; the old people, he believes, are well taken care of; he never saw a beggar in the street.

They appear very well satisfied with their condition in general; some he has heard have been offered to return to Africa but refused it; old negroes consider their situation as vastly preferable to the new, and go to the beach to see them imported: to prove the attachment of slaves to their masters, he relates that a number of foreign runaways had come over, that a number of the negroes of Dominique, perhaps tempted by the French, had left their masters, and that others, perhaps through discontent, had deserted also, that these altogether inhabited the woods of Dominique, and were armed, and there committed many acts of violence against the inhabitants,

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so as to determine the Legislature, after an ineffectual trial of every lenient method, to endeavour to reduce them by force; slaves from the different estates were on this service, and through the whole course of it manifested the greatest zeal and desire to bring them back to their duty.

Witness examined—DAVID PARRY, Esq.

David Parry, Esq. resided at Barbadoes near seven years as governor of the island, and left it July 6th, 1789. Masters behave to their slaves with every possible kindness and attention. Negroes seem properly fed, clothed, and lodged; had it not been so, he would, as it was his business, have enforced the law to that end: not half so much labour required of them as their owners had a right to demand; the common labour of a negro would be play to any English peasant; never saw the least degree of despondency among them; has every reason to suppose them perfectly satisfied, as no complaint ever reached his ear. Banishment is the severest punishment to a negro at Barbadoes; there is no corporal punishment they would not prefer; has known them even hesitate between banishment and death. In general he thinks their state infinitely more comfortable than that of the labouring poor in England, or any other part of the world that he knows; he thinks it impossible that the West Indies could be cultivated by Europeans without such a destruction of the human race as would harrow up the feelings of the hardest breast, and would be (to the imaginary distresses of
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the negroes) inhumanity in the extreme. He has not the smallest doubt that a supply of negroes from Africa is necessary to the cultivation of sugar estates, particularly if they mean to improve more land; the abolition of the slave trade would, in his opinion, prove detrimental both to the colonies and the empire at large; it would raise the productions of that country beyond the power of the consumers here to purchase, and consequently lessen the revenue in proportion as the consumption is diminished, and would injure the individual in his property by increasing his private expences; it would occasion the immediate declension and final ruin of the sugar colonies, unless they were at liberty to seek for and carry their sugar and other produce to other markets, which would be bad policy.

Witness examined—Lord RODNEY.

Lord Rodney went first to the West Indies in 1761; he resided first at Barbadoes, then Martinique, Antigua, St. Kitt's, and a small time at Guadaloupe, when those islands belonged to Great Britain; he was also at Jamaica three years and a half. Masters in the several islands seemed very attentive to their slaves; it is their interest to be so; he never saw one instance of cruelty, but many of forbearance on an impertinent answer being given to the masters. Slaves seemed properly clothed for the climate in all the islands; in Jamaica seemed better fed than the common labouring people here; the other islands have not grounds to give them such food as Jamaica can

can afford; they appeared also extremely well lodged for the climate, and their houses calculated for it; no more labour was required of them than they could properly bear; a hundred times he has noticed that he thought a labouring man in England did more work in one day than any three negroes; he has often noticed in the many plantations he has visited, that there is an hospital called the sick house, with negro women attending as nurses; there is scarce a plantation without a surgeon; it is their interest to be attentive. The negroes appeared to him to be in a state the reverse of desponding; after the day's work they were generally dancing and making merry; thinks it impossible to cultivate West-India plantations to any advantage by Europeans; believes the present stock in the islands could not be kept up without fresh importations, for he believes breeding is encouraged as much as possible, for one Creole is in value worth two new ones from Guinea.

Considers the ships in the French West-India trade as the greatest source of their power; for the West-India commerce enabled France last war to dispute with Great Britain the empire of the sea; their West Indiamen are generally much larger than the British, and appeared more than doubly manned; thinks the British West-India trade a considerable nursery for seamen, and the West-India fleet very advantageous in time of war in furnishing men for the service, who are seasoned to the West India climate; thinks it extremely important to keep up a trade, which he considers one of our principal branches of commerce; without the African trade the West Indies, he thinks,

thinks, could not be supported; in 1787 the French paid 200 livres a-head premium for every slave imported into St. Domingo and St. Lucia, and one hundred for each imported into Martinique and Gaudaloupe, besides a premium on ships that traded from the ports of France to the coast of Guinea, payable immediately on their sailing at so much per ton; the abolition of the slave trade would tend to reduce the British West-India trade, and lessen the number of ships and seamen; it would tend to increase the French marine in general; if the British slave trade were abolished and engrossed by foreign nations, it would add to the naval power of France, who has already much more than half the West-India trade in her hands, and diminish that of Great Britain in proportion.

The property of slaves in the produce of their gardens, their poultry, and pigs, as far as he has observed, is held sacred, and never taken from them without just compensation, and at the market price.

If it were possible for a slave to be happy, they seemed to be so; they never knew what liberty was, so far as regards only their food, clothing, lodging, and care of them in sickness and in health, he thinks their lives as happy as those of the peasants of this country.

As to seamen in the streets of Jamaica dying in an ulcerated state, falling without pity, without friends, without a look, but of contempt from the hardened multitude that passes by, &c., he does not believe any thing of the sort ever happened in any of the islands; these may have been drunken seamen.

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He states, that in 1747 he saw 180 sail of French West-India ships in one convoy, bound from St. Domingo to France; that we took 40 of them, the value of which was 500,000*l.* and refers it to the Committee to judge how much that commerce must have increased the last 40 years. He is convinced that France could not have disputed the empire of the ocean with us last war, but for their West-India commerce.

The African slave trade certainly supplies seamen to his Majesty's navy, because, when they come to the West Indies, we get some of them: it is not a nursery for seamen, that is certain, but it seasons them to a hot climate.

WEST-INDIA *Witness examined before* Sir PETER PARKER

Admiral Sir Peter Parker was captain of a man of war on the Leeward Island station the war before last about 3 years. He was at the taking of Guadaloupe, and occasionally visited Barbadoes and all the Leeward Islands, except Nevis. In 1777 he was appointed Admiral and commander in chief of all the king's ships at Jamaica, where he arrived February 1778 where he remained till 1782. The treatment of slaves in the several islands was lenient, mild, and humane. He never heard even one instance of severity during his stay there. The slaves not only seemed properly fed, lodged, and clothed, but in a more comfortable state than the lower class of people in any part of Europe, Great Britain not excepted.

No more labour was required of them than they could properly bear. Our peasantry scarce earn a livelihood by labour much harder than these are put to, and in age and infirmities drag on a miserable life on a pitiful allowance of 1s. 6d. or 2s. per week, from their parishes; whence the negro, when old and infirm, has particular attention paid to make him easy and comfortable; and if he has acquired money, which all industrious negroes may do, he may live in affluence all the rest of his days; he knows that his family and friends will be sure of protection and good treatment after his decease, and that he may bequeath his property to whom he pleases; they are far from being in a state of despondency, and are generally chearful and merry. The manning vessels in our dock yards with negroes, to water and store the king's ships, he is satisfied has saved the lives of thousands. The captains under his command had all leave to enter a few negroes. The ships, when once watered, keep up the quantity with their own long boats. In proof that negroes are necessary for this service, he relates that a frigate, about to sail from Port Royal, sent her long-boat to Rock fort for water with a midshipman, cockswain, and six seamen; and that on he return, next morning, the midshipman and six seamen were taken ill and died.

He thinks the present stock of negroes cannot be kept up without fresh importations from Africa; experience proves it otherwise.

He considers the ships in the French West-India trade as a principal source of their naval power; their

ships in general are larger than ours, and carry double the number of men.

Their West-India trade is immense, and, in his opinion, two-thirds of their whole commerce; should they obstruct their African trade, which he thinks they are too wise to do, they would lose their consequence among the nations of Europe, and not be able to fit out fleets sufficient to alarm their neighbours. He hears, and thinks it probable, they are endeavouring to improve their West-India trade, and their African as connected with it.

The British West-India trade is a great nursery for seamen; we should find it difficult to man a great fleet without it. There can be no doubt that that trade, and also the African, are extremely serviceable in manning King's ships in the West Indies in time of war. He received upwards of 2000 into the fleet under his command, and manned several ships that he bought for the King from West-India merchantmen and African ships; those traders furnish seamen peculiarly adapted to West-India service, and more able to manage the King's ships in that station, than seamen usually employed in Europe. It is important to the kingdom to keep up British West-India trade, but more important to keep up the African.

The abolition of the African trade would, in his opinion, cause a general despondency among the negroes, and gradually decrease population, and consequently the produce of our islands, and must in time destroy near one half of our commerce, and take from Great Britain all pretensions to the rank she now holds of being the first maritime power in the world.

In the same ratio that our power decreases, that of the French will increase.

He has never seen nor heard of sailors dying in the streets of Jamaica, objects both of commiseration and horror, as stated in the report of the Privy Council, except in the Committee room.

The following Extract from Bruce's Travels is added as corroborating some Part of the preceding Evidence.

We are sorry in reading this curious anecdote, preserved to us in scripture, to find in those early ages of the India trade, that another species of commerce was closely connected with it, which modern philanthropy has branded as the disgrace of human nature. It is plain from the passage, the commerce of men was then universally established. Joseph * is bought as readily, and sold as currently immediately after, as any ox or camel could be at this day. Three nations, Javan, Tubal, Meshech †, are mentioned as having their principal trade at Tyre in the selling of men : and as late as St. John's time ‡ this is mentioned as a principal part of the trade of Babylon : notwithstanding which no prohibition from God, or censure from the Prophets, have ever stigmatised it, either as irreligious or immoral ; on the contrary, it is always spoken of as favourably as any species of commerce whatever. For this, and many other reasons which I could mention, I cannot think

* Gen. chap. xxxvii. 25, 28.

† Ezek. chap. xxvii. 130.

‡ Rev. chap. xviii. v. 13.

that purchasing of slaves is either cruel or unnatural. To purchase any living creature to abuse it afterwards, is certainly both base and criminal, and the crime becomes still of a deeper dye when our fellow creatures come to be the sufferers. But although this is an abuse which accidentally follows the trade, it is no necessary part of the trade itself; and it is against this abuse the wisdom of the Legislature should be directed, not against the trade itself.

On the eastern side of the peninsula of Africa many thousand slaves are sold to Asia, perfectly in the same manner as those on the west side are sent to the West Indies; but no one that ever I heard as yet opened his mouth against the sale of Africans to the East Indies; and yet there is an aggravation in this last sale of slaves that should touch us much more than the other, where no such additional grievance can be pretended. The slaves sold into Asia are most of them Christians; they are sold to Mahometans, and with their liberty they are certainly deprived of their religion likewise. But the treatment of the Asiatics being much more humane than what the Africans sold to the West Indies meet with, no clamour has yet been raised against this commerce in Asia, because its only bad consequence is apostacy; a proof to me that religion has no part in the present dispute; or as I have said, it is the abuse which accidentally follows the purchasing of slaves, not the trade itself that should be considered as the grievance.

It is plain from all history that two abominable practices, the one the eating of men, the other of sacrificing them to the devil, prevailed over all Africa.

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The India trade, as we have seen in very early ages, first established the buying and selling of slaves; since that time the eating of men, or the sacrificing them, has so greatly decreased on the eastern side of the peninsula, that now we scarcely hear of an instance of either of these that can be properly vouched. On the western part, towards the Atlantic Ocean, where the sale of slaves began considerably later after the discovery of America and the West Indies, both of these horrid practices are, as it were, general; though I am told less so to the northward since that event.

There is still alive a man of the name of Matthews, who was present at one of those bloody banquets on the west of Africa to the northward of Senega. It is probable that the continuation of the slave trade would have abolished these in time on the west side: also many other reasons could be alledged, did my plan permit it.

THE END,

No 6

FARTHER REASONS

OF A

COUNTRY GENTLEMAN,

&c. &c.

A Countri Gentleman's reasons for voting against Mr. Wilberforces motion

London 1792

Brit. 129#Beibd.4

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